

To: Albright, David[Albright.David@epa.gov]; Dermer, Michele[Dermer.Michele@epa.gov]; Coffman, Joel[Coffman.Joel@epa.gov]; Robin, George[Robin.George@epa.gov]; Rumrill, Nancy[Rumrill.Nancy@epa.gov]
Cc: McWhirter, Lisa[McWhirter.Lisa@epa.gov]; Engelman, Alexa[ENGELMAN.ALEXA@EPA.GOV]; Montgomery, Michael[Montgomery.Michael@epa.gov]; Rao, Kate[Rao.kate@epa.gov]
From: Moffatt, Brett
Sent: Tue 9/22/2015 6:06:14 PM
Subject: RE: AE hearing media

Many protest Price Canyon oil field owner's plans to expand well area

By David Sneed

dsneed@thetribunenews.com September 21, 2015

2015-09-22T01:02:35Z

David Sneed The Tribune

County Supervisor Adam Hill criticized state regulators Monday for not keeping local officials in the loop about plans to more than triple the area allowed for groundwater injection wells beneath the Price Canyon oil field.

At a public comment hearing in San Luis Obispo, Hill said the state [Department of Conservation](#) had not followed normal protocols that call for state and federal agencies to coordinate with local elected officials about upcoming meetings of local concern. Hill said he originally found out about Monday's meeting from constituents who have been following plans to expand the oil field.

"I cannot imagine having a meeting and not coordinating it with local officials, which we would have been happy to do," said Hill, whose district includes the oil field.

Steve Bohlen, state oil and gas supervisor, denied that his department had snubbed Hill and other local officials. "It seems to me that we have been very open in this process," he said.

Final approval of the expansion will be made by the federal [Environmental Protection Agency](#). February 2017 is the deadline for either approving or denying the expansion.

Oil field owner [Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas](#) has applied to more than triple the area in which it is allowed to inject water into the groundwater basin beneath the oil field. The expansion is necessary because state officials mistakenly allowed the oil company to drill injection wells outside the current allowable area.

The injection wells are used to inject steam into the wells to thin the oil and make it easier to pump. Wastewater from the drilling process is also disposed of in the wells.

State water quality and oil industry regulators have tentatively recommended that the expansion be approved. They have concluded that the area beneath the oil field is not suitable as a drinking water source and including the wells currently outside the allowable drilling area does not endanger nearby domestic water wells.

Monday's hearing was a chance for the public to comment on the expansion proposal. Nearly 100 people attended the meeting, most of whom protested the proposal.

Natalie Beller, who lives near the oil field, said the community is upset because they consider the oil company's application to expand the oil field to be inadequate and they need more information. Their main concern is that the expansion could affect nearby drinking water wells.

"There are at least 100 water supply wells within a mile of this oil field, but the application didn't show exact map locations or sampling of these wells," she said.

Others agreed, saying the expansion of the injection area would be an unacceptable risk to the area's drinking water.

"How can you even consider expanding drilling into this aquifer?" asked Michael Hannon of Arroyo Grande. "This is corporate greed, pure and simple."

Read more here: http://www.sanluisobispo.com/2015/09/21/3819300_price-canyon-oil-field-owner-wants.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy

Brett Moffatt

US EPA, Region 9

(415) 972-3946

From: Albright, David

Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2015 7:11 AM

To: Dermer, Michele; Coffman, Joel; Robin, George; Rumrill, Nancy

Cc: McWhirter, Lisa; Moffatt, Brett; Engelman, Alexa; Montgomery, Michael; Rao, Kate

Subject: FW: AE hearing media

Yesterday, the State (DOGGR and Water Board) held a hearing on an aquifer exemption proposal for the Arroyo Grande oilfield in San Luis Obispo County. FYI, see article on the hearing and press release from CBD in Alexa's message.

<http://www.keyt.com/news/big-turnout-for-oil-field-aquifer-exemption-hearing/35407102>

From: Engelman, Alexa
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 5:11 PM
To: Moffatt, Brett; Albright, David; McWhirter, Lisa
Subject: AE hearing media

http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2015/oil-waste-09-21-2015.html

Note the last bullet on their concerns about the AE proposal.

Alexa Engelman, Esq.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Region IX Office of Regional Counsel

75 Hawthorne Street, ORC-2

San Francisco, CA 94105

Phone: (415) 972-3884

Fax: (415) 947-3570

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